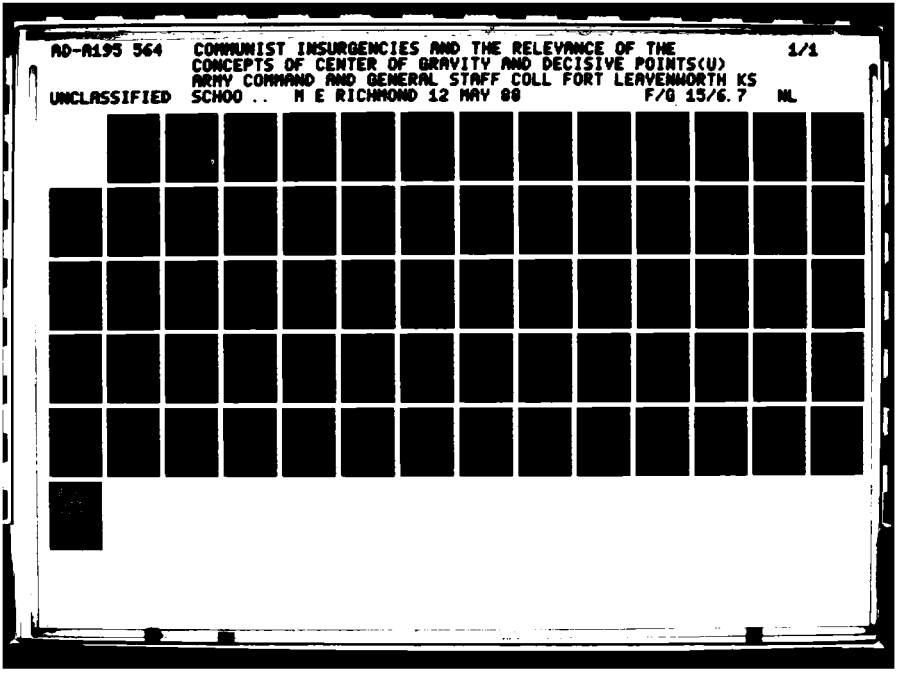
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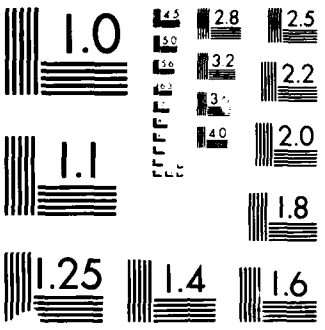

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Communist Insurgencies and the Relevance of the Concepts of Center of Gravity and Decisive Points

by

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This paper analyzes the relevancy of the terms center of gravity and decisive points at the operational level of war in communist insurgencies. It begins by proposing acceptable meanings for the terms center of gravity, decisive points, subversion, insurgency, and counter-insurgency. The subsequent portion of the analysis explores the characteristics of insurgent warfare. Historical examples illustrate each characteristic by establishing a situation and context of historical significance. It is in this context that the study examines the characteristics of communist insurgency and their relation to the terms center of gravity and decisive points at the operational level of conflict.

This study found that an analysis of insurgencies clearly identifies an operational center of gravity for cellular-type insurgencies such as communist insurgencies. The communist cells of active supporters neatly fulfills the Clausewitzian concept of center of gravity with only minor modification. The most important characteristic (continued on other side)

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is that they are truly the "hub of all power and movement, on which everything else depends." They are the source of supplies, recruits and intelligence for the entire insurgency. Although they are not physically concentrated as Clausewitz demands, they derive strength from the security of their dispersion and will concetrate when necessary. The communist cells and active supporters are the cohesion of the movement. As Clausewitz said, "Where there is cohesion, the analogy of center of gravity can be applied."

Because a communist insurgency's center of mass is usually dispersed, its center of gravity is difficult to identify. Consequently, operational planners must normally strike the insurgency's center of gravity indirectly by attacking its decisive points. Thus, Jomini's decisive points are especially applicable to communist insurgencies. There are several decisive points the operational planner should target when planning a counter-insurgency operation. Concrete grievances of the populace, secure bases, and charismatic leaders are all targets which if destroyed by military means or neutralized through social, economic, or political means will have a "marked influence" on the enemy's center of gravity. By attacking the decisive points, the center of gravity will soon collapse.

The monograph concludes by recommending that the military adopt the terms center of gravity and decisive points to its doctrine concerning insurgent warfare. Furthermore, it recommends that the military should not transpose the terms' classical definitions directly to modern doctrine but instead should amend them somewhat to enhance their applicability to modern warfare.

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ABSTRACT

COMMUNIST INSURGENCIES AND THE RELEVANCE OF THE CONCEPTS OF CENTER OF GRAVITY AND DECISIVE POINTS by MAJ Melvin E. Richmond, Jr., USA, 61 pages.

This paper analyzes the relevancy of the terms center of gravity and decisive points at the operational level of war in communist insurgencies. It begins by proposing acceptable meanings for the terms center of gravity, decisive points, subversion, insurgency, and counter-insurgency. The subsequent portion of the analysis explores the characteristics of insurgent warfare. Historical examples illustrate each characteristic by establishing a situation and context of historical significance. It is in this context that the study examines the characteristics of communist insurgency and their relation to the terms center of gravity and decisive points at the operational level of conflict.

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SECTION 1

INTRODUCTION

In 1964, Roger Trinquier wrote the following:

> We still persist in studying a type of warfare that no longer exists and that we shall never fight again, while we pay only passing attention to the war we lost in Indochina and the one we are about to lose in Algeria. Yet the abandonment of Indochina or of Algeria is just as important for France as would be the loss of a metropolitan province.
>
> The result of this shortcoming is that the army is not prepared to confront an adversary employing arms and methods the army itself ignores. It has, therefore, no chance of winning. . . .
>
> Our military machine reminds one of a pile driver attempting to crush a fly, indefatigably persisting in repeating its efforts.
>
> The inability of the army to adapt itself to changed circumstances has heavy consequences. It gives credence to the belief that our adversaries, who represent only weak forces, are invincible and that, sooner or later, we shall have to accept their conditions for peace. It encourages the diffusion of dangerously erroneous ideas, which eventually become generally accepted.[1]

If one substituted the words "France" with "the United States," and "Algeria" with "Nicaragua," "Panama," "the Philippines," or any other of a number of Third World nations, Trinquier's assertion might very well apply to the situation in which the United States finds itself today. The nation and the military remain fixed on a possible conflict with the Soviet Union in western Europe. A conflict which, although the most dangerous in terms of its immediate consequences to the United States, is also the least likely to occur.

Numerous studies point to conflicts short of war being the United States military's most likely contingency. One of the most recent of these studies, Discriminate Deterrence: Report of the Commission on Integrated Long-Term Strategy, contends that:

> Our adversaries tell themselves that they often run little risk when they attack U.S. interests or allies in the Third World, especially

> if the warfare is of low intensity and protracted, and if they use guerrilla forces, paramilitary terrorist organizations, or armed subversives. If we do not improve our ability to counter this lesser violence, we will surely lose the support of many Third World countries that want to believe the United States can protect its friends, not to mention its own interests. Violence in the Third World threatens our interests in a variety of ways.[2]

To improve the nation's "ability to counter this lesser violence," the Armed Forces of the United States must reflect its concern for winning conflicts short of war in its force design, training, and doctrine. An integral part of doctrine is the development of a distinct military terminology allowing the user to concisely express his meaning. It must also be relevant to current problems the military may face, including low-intensity conflict. *Center of gravity* and *decisive points* are terms that currently permeate the Army's doctrine. They are the focus of this study.

Carl von Clausewitz wrote his treatise On War over 150 years ago. One of his many theories concerned the concept of center of gravity. Likewise, during the same period Baron De Jomini wrote of decisive points. In the 1986 version of Field Manual 100-5, Operations, the United States Army bestowed a measure of currency and relevancy to Clausewitz's theory of center of gravity by acknowledging its importance to strategy and operational art. Since the publication of FM 100-5 there has been much controversy concerning the meaning of center of gravity and decisive points. To advance the debate one step further, this inquiry analyzes their relevancy at the operational level of war in what Roger Trinquier calls *modern warfare* and what the US Army's Strategic Studies Institute calls ". . . the most dangerous form of LIC . . .,"[3] communist insurgent warfare.

This study begins by proposing acceptable meanings for the terms center of gravity, decisive points, subversion, insurgency, and

counter-insurgency. The subsequent portion of the analysis explores the characteristics of insurgent warfare. Historical examples illustrate each characteristic by establishing a situation and context of historical significance. It is in this context that the study examines the characteristics of communist insurgency and their relation to the terms center of gravity and decisive points at the operational level of conflict. The study closes with judgements on the suitability and relevance of the terms center of gravity and decisive points to low-intensity conflict. Furthermore it recommends whether or not the military should transpose the terms' classical definitions directly to modern doctrine or amend them somewhat to enhance their applicability to modern warfare.

Before proceeding further it is imperative to acknowledge the importance to this study of Professor Bard E. O'Neill's framework for analyzing insurgencies found in his book, Insurgency in the Modern World. It is the basis for analysis in Section 3. A condensed outline of his framework is enclosed as appendices to this study.

SECTION 2

DEFINITIONS

CENTER OF GRAVITY

FM 100-5, Operations, the Army's capstone warfighting manual, asserts that the essence of operational art is "the identification of the enemy's center of gravity."[4] Likewise, when identifying the seven tenets of a campaign plan, the Army's Strategic Studies Institute cites the orientation on the enemy's center of gravity as one of the seven tenets.[5] Assuming these two assertions are correct, operational planners must fully understand the theoretical term center of gravity and, if possible, apply it to communist insurgencies.

The theory of center of gravity originated with the 19th century military theorist, Carl von Clausewitz. He proposed that certain characteristics become decisive in time of war and that these factors must remain paramount in the mind of both belligerents. He defines center of gravity by assigning it certain attributes:

> Out of these characteristics a certain center of gravity develops, the hub of all power and movement, on which everything depends. That is the point against which all our energies should be directed.[6]

Clausewitz clearly distinguishes between the centers of gravity at each level of war. Today, FM 100-5 calls these the strategic center of gravity and the operational center of gravity. At the strategic level of war, Clausewitz identified four possible centers of gravity: (1) the capital, (2) the army of a small nation's protector, (3) the cohesion of an alliance, and (4) in popular uprisings the personalities of the leaders and public opinion.[7] Although On War is basically a treatise on conventional war, in the fourth possibility cited above Clausewitz specifically

identifies likely strategic centers of gravity for popular uprisings or as called in this study, insurgencies.[8] However, Clausewitz clearly contends that at the operational level of war a belligerent's center of gravity is always the concentrated physical mass of his army.

> A center of gravity is always found where the mass is concentrated most densely. It presents the most effective target for a blow; furthermore, the heaviest blow is that struck by the center of gravity. The same holds true in war. The fighting forces of each belligerent--whether a single state or an alliance of states--have a certain unity and therefore some cohesion. Where there is cohesion, the analogy of the center of gravity can be applied. Thus these forces will possess certain centers of gravity, which, by their movement and direction, govern the rest; and those centers of gravity will be found wherever the forces are most concentrated.[9]

In sum, the classic Clausewitzian model identifies the operational center of gravity to be the physical mass of the army. Since modern technology has mitigated the analogy that greater numbers of combat forces equates directly to greater combat power, it is useful to modernize the Clausewitzian model of center of gravity by defining it as the force's ". . . greatest concentration of combat force. This is the hub of all power and movement."[10]

DECISIVE POINT

Clausewitz identifies the mass of the army as its center of gravity. But, he qualifies this by recognizing that superiority in numbers is only one of many determinants of victory. He states that superiority in numbers is only significant when it is concentrated and "great enough to counterbalance all other contributing circumstances."[11] The true acumen of the operational artist is his ability to avoid the head-on collision between his and opposing centers of gravity. He does this by attacking his opponent's center of gravity indirectly. The destruction or capture of the

objectives of these indirect assaults will have a "marked influence upon the result of the campaign."[12] These objectives are decisive points. Another way of stating this proposition is that the destruction or capture of a decisive point has a significant effect on the enemy's center of gravity, thereby leading to an adverse decision by the affected commander.

Jomini classifies decisive points into two categories: geographic and accidental points of maneuver. Geographic decisive points are permanent and derive significance from their physical location within the theater of operation. Examples of geographic decisive points include key transportation nodes, governmental centers, and dominant terrain features.

Decisive points of maneuver, on the other hand, are transient. They may include a vulnerable flank temporarily open to attack or a vulnerable line of communication laid open by a force's direction of maneuver.

Like center of gravity, the Jominian concept of decisive points becomes more useful to the modern operational artist if updated. James J. Schneider, Professor of Military Theory, U.S. Army School of Advanced Military Studies, classifies decisive points into three categories: physical, cybernetic, and moral.[13] By his definition, physical decisive points equate directly to the classical concept of geographic decisive points. "Cybernetic decisive points are those which sustain command, control, communications and the processing of information." Examples of cybernetic decisive points include a command post, the commander and his staff, a communications relay center, a communication satellite, etc. Schneider postulates that moral decisive points, ". . . sustain the forces' morale--their magnitude of will."[14] Moral decisive points could include a charismatic leader, the threat of nuclear or chemical weapons, or the

feeling by soldiers that their efforts are appreciated by the people of their nation. At any rate, attacks against decisive points impact directly upon the *cohesion* of the enemy's center of gravity.

Professor Schneider's classification of decisive points into the physical, cybernetic, and moral domains facilitates the analysis of communist insurgent campaigns. In contrast to conventional conflicts, the relationships between military and political operations become more complex in communist insurgencies; thus, the validity of Professor Schneider's concept in regard to insurgent warfare will become clear.

SUBVERSION/INSURGENCY/COUNTER-INSURGENCY

Neither subversion, insurgency, nor counter-insurgency (nor any other term currently associated with conflicts short of war) are listed in the Army's latest FM 101-5-1, Operational Terms and Symbols. Similarly their definitions are inaccurate and incomplete in the Army's capstone manual for low-intensity conflict, FC 100-20, Low-Intensity Conflict, and the Department of Defense's JCS Pub. 1, Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.[15] It is therefore necessary to define each of these before proceeding further with this study.

There are two key points in regard to both subversion and insurgency. The first point is that they are actions directed by one segment of an indigenous population against another segment of that population. Although forces from outside the nation may provide much of the impetus behind the actions, the struggle is always from within.

The second important point is that the initial target of both subversion and insurgency is the population at large. Their goal is to gain legitimacy in the eyes of the populace. Insurgents gain legitimacy through

many forms of coercion ranging from peaceful persuasion to violent force. They determine the degree of force necessary to advance their cause by the amount of coercion required to induce the people to support the subversive/insurgent effort. "The people of a country can only be made to rise up against the authorities by being persuaded of the need to do so, or by being forced to do it."[16]

Subversion includes:

> . . . all measures short of the use of armed force taken by one section of the people of a country to overthrow those governing the country at the time, or to force them to do things which they do not want to do. It can involve the use of political and economic pressure, strikes, protest marches, and propaganda, and can also include the use of small-scale violence for the purpose of coercing recalcitrant members of the population into giving support.[17]

Subversion is normally used early in the effort with the goal of peacefully effecting governmental capitulation to the aims of the subversive element. If those attempting to effect change are unable to achieve their goals through the less-violent measures of subversion, they are likely to turn to insurgency to attain their ends. Insurgency is ". . . the use of armed force by a section of the people against the government . . ." to achieve the same purposes outlined for subversion above. Unlike conventional war where belligerents use persuasion to back-up violence, the insurgents use force only to reinforce their efforts of persuasion.[18]

Counter-insurgency includes all military, political, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat an insurgency.[19] Successful efforts at counter-insurgency often assume many of the characteristics of successful insurgencies.

SECTION 3

INSURGENCY

GENERAL

Before proceeding with a discussion of the relevancy to communist insurgency of the theoretical concepts of center of gravity and decisive points, it is necessary to lay a framework for analysis of the characteristics of insurgency. Albeit somewhat lengthy, it is only through such an analysis of insurgency that one can derive the relative significance of the characteristics of insurgency; thus establishing a basis for determining centers of gravity and/or decisive points. The format for this analysis follows the framework established by Bard E. O'Neill in his lead chapter, "Insurgency: A Framework of Analysis," of Insurgency in the Modern World. It begins with a discussion of the significance of insurgent warfare for the United States Armed Forces followed by an examination of the various forms of insurgency. The analysis of insurgency concludes with a study of the "major analytical variables" of communist insurgency.

THE RISING INCIDENCE OF INSURGENCY

Insurgency is the form of conflict the Armed Forces of the United States is most likely to face in the near and foreseeable future. There are three primary reasons for this: (1) the way citizens view authority, (2) the "shrinking of the world" due to advances in modern technology, and (3) the omnipresence of the threat of nuclear escalation in all conflicts involving the world's super powers.[20] The manner in which people view the authorities exercising control over their nations has stimulated numerous conflicts. Nations throughout Asia and Africa have experienced nationalist

uprisings in the late 20th century as the people seek to rid themselves of "imperialist" domination.

Nationalism and anti-imperialism have been common issues in many communist insurgencies since the 1920's. The Hukbalahap (an acronym for the *Huk ng Bayan Laban sa Hapon* -- or the Anti-Japanese Army [Huk]) insurgency in the Philippines from 1946-1955 began its efforts to overthrow the government by advocating the expulsion of the "imperialist" Japanese. Once that threat was removed by the Allies in 1944, the "imperialist" Americans soon became one of the targets of the insurgency. Anti-imperialism also provided impetus to the insurgent movement during Vietnam's efforts to oust the French and the Japanese in the 1940's. The communist Vietnamese then directed their propaganda against the United States by portraying them to be the new "imperialist" power subjugating the people of Vietnam. Nationalism and anti-imperialism often serve as the rallying cry for what communists term a "war of national liberation."

Like nationalism, social discontent and an increasing impatience with racist regimes have spawned their share of insurrection. The opposition to the policies of apartheid and minority rule that is currently rampant in South Africa exemplifies the growing dissatisfaction among long-oppressed people. Similarly, America's civil rights movements of the 1960's and 70's illustrate what the discontented would consider an attempt to change a ruling regime's racist policies. Although most Americans would stop short of describing the United States government's policies toward minorities to be racist or directly comparable to the policy of apartheid in South Africa, those opposing the policies of "separate but equal" and fighting for their civil rights certainly consider the policies just that.

The second reason for a rising incidence of insurgency is that the world has become "smaller" through the advent of mass telecommunications and rapid means of transportation. Both developments have raised the literacy level of the people of the Third World, enlarged their exposure to outside influences, and heightened their perception of relative deprivation.[21] In general they have enhanced the spread of revolutionary dictates throughout vulnerable populations. Recent terrorist activities by the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Irish Republican Army in Northern Ireland and other extremist organizations throughout the world, all seek to capitalize on the media in proffering their cause to the people. The media has become so important that some communist "revolutionaries" have even hired public relations firms in the United States to extol the virtues of their cause throughout the world; e.g., the Sandinistas of Nicaragua.

Finally, and maybe the most significant reason for the rising incidence of insurgency is the limitation the threat of thermonuclear war has placed on the superpowers to undertake anything but low-level forms of conflict. The proliferation of nuclear weapons with the resultant escalation of the threat of a nuclear exchange has dissuaded the Soviet Union and the United States from engaging in a direct confrontation. Conversely, it has encouraged less developed countries and elements within these smaller nations to engage in subversive activities. Insurgents are able to prosecute their campaigns with little risk of massive superpower intervention. Unless the superpower considers the area to be of vital interest, it is highly unlikely that it will risk nuclear escalation by entering into the internal conflict of a less developed nation with the full weight of means available

to it.[22] The North Vietnamese clearly understood this phenomenon when they undertook their war in South Vietnam.

FORMS OF INSURGENCY

The political aim of any insurgency forms the structural basis for all else that occurs during its course. Since operational art and campaign planning are inextricably linked to the achievement of strategic goals, it is necessary to identify the types of insurgent movements, their target, and their strategic goal. Bard E. O'Neill identifies six types of insurgency in his book Insurgency in the Modern World: secessionist, reformist, revolutionary, restorational, reactionary, and conservative.[23] Although each is different, all have one factor in common: their basic premise disputes the *legitimacy* of the ruling power and/or their policies in the eyes of the populace.

Secessionists' basic premise is a total rejection of the ". . . existing political community of which they are formally a part."[24] Their goal is to extricate themselves from the current government's jurisdiction and create a new and separate government of their own. The American Civil War, the Bangladesh War of 1971, and the Nigerian Civil War (Biafran War) from 1966 to 1970 are excellent examples of secessionist insurgencies.

Rejection of the current *policies* of the reigning government is the basis of reformist efforts. They seek to "obtain more political, social, and economic benefits" without rejecting the legitimacy of the government to rule.[25] Here, the overthrow of the government is not normally necessary or even desirable. The primary purpose is to persuade the government to change discriminatory policies. These policies may include land-reform, racial inequities, etc. As discussed earlier, civil disturbances within

the United States by Black Americans were targeted toward the revision of racially discriminatory policies of the government.

Although communists often disguise their actual purpose with goals of governmental reform, replacement with a totally new system is normally their strategic goal. Revolutionary insurgencies are one of the most prevalent forms of insurgency today. In this type, the insurgent rejects the *legitimacy* of the government-in-being. They do not desire to separate themselves from the nation like secessionists or change the policies of the government like reformists. Rather, they want to replace the regime with one having a radically different social and political structure.

The Huk insurgency 1946-1955 is a clear illustration of this form of insurgency. The primary purpose of the Huk insurgency was to institute a communist regime over the Philippines. Despite the insurgent's actual aim, the issues "sold" to the populace were land-reform, redistribution of wealth to the lower classes, and removal of imperialist powers.

Like revolutionary insurgencies, both restorational and reactionary insurgencies reject the legitimacy of the government-in-being. The difference is in their goals. Restorational insurgents seek to replace the current regime with one that previously held power. The Philippine insurgency during World War II in which the guerrillas allied themselves with the United States in an effort to restore the pre-war government of the Philippines exemplifies a restorational insurgency. Reactionary insurgencies, on the other hand, seek to restore an idealized political order from the distant past, a golden age. It is normally associated with religious values and an authoritarian structure.[26] The revolution in Iran in the late 1970's to overthrow the Shah of Iran illustrates the reactionary

insurgency. If the Shah's son were to initiate an insurgency to regain the throne his father possessed, his would be a restorational insurgency.

The final form of insurgency is the conservative insurgency. Conservative insurgents seek to preserve the existing government and its policies in the face of mounting dissention against the regime within other portions of the populace. The Protestant organizations established to counteract the efforts of the Irish Republican Army to separate Northern Ireland from British rule provide an excellent contemporary example of this form of insurgency.

ANALYTICAL VARIABLES

Popular Support

All insurgencies are basically a struggle for the support of the populace. Trinquier wrote, ". . . the *Sine Qua Non* of victory in *modern warfare* is the unconditional support of the population."[27] This is absolutely true in communist insurgencies. Mao Tse Tung called this the political mobilization of the people.[28] A frequently used way of illustrating the importance of gaining the support of the people is Mao's simile likening the revolutionary to fish and the masses to the sea in which the fish swim. Without popular support (the sea), the revolutionary (the fish) is unable to survive.

Although popular support is necessary for a successful insurgency, it is rarely present in sufficient intensity in the early stages of insurgency. Thus, the first stage of any revolutionary movement is normally to gain the support of the masses. Each insurgency is unique in its characteristics and various revolutionary leaders will name their stages of insurgency differently. Despite the differences in terminology, there are

two phases common to the development of all insurgencies.[29] Phase one of all insurgencies is to gain the support of a significant portion of the population. The second phase encompasses the imposition of the insurgent's will on the government in power.[30] Imposition of will is not necessarily the overthrow of the government, but may simply be a realization of limited goals established by the insurgency (as in a reformist insurgency).

These phases are not mutually exclusive. Phase one, building popular support, is a never-ending process often continuing well after a successful insurgency. The current situation in Nicaragua displays this phenomenon. The Sandinistas continue to work toward expanding their popular support base despite the fact that they hold the reins of power. Phase two, the actual imposition of will, assumes more or less emphasis as the success of the insurgency increases or incurs setbacks.

The most important step toward gaining popular support is to identify an issue around which the insurgent can attract the populace. This is not always a simple matter, but it is always necessary. Without such an issue the insurgent might as well abandon his efforts since he will certainly fail. Che Guevara's unsuccessful attempt at exporting his brand of revolution lacked an issue acceptable to the unwilling people of Bolivia; thus illustrating the necessity of identifying an issue the people will embrace.

Although the insurgent may believe strongly in the issue he promotes, he may find that it fails to excite the population enough to compel them to support his movement actively. As stated earlier, the insurgent must have a solid nucleus of active support[31] within the population <u>and</u> a broad base of passive support.[32] The issue the insurgent promotes is the basis for any popular support he may engender. If the issue is found to be

unacceptable to the populace, then the insurgent must replace, or at least disguise, his actual motives with an issue having more popular appeal. By doing this he makes the insurgency more palatable to the populace.

In their struggle against the government, the Huk's primary goal was revolutionary. It was to replace the current regime with their own regime based on communist ideals. Nevertheless, removal of a corrupt government and land-reform became the goals most appealing to the populace. Ergo, the Huks espoused these latter issues as the basis for gaining popular support. Likewise, when Ho Chi Minh and Vo Nguyen Giap conducted their "nationalist" struggle to oust the "imperialist" French government from control of Vietnam, they found that land-reform was the platform which gained them the most popular support. Consequently, Giap integrated land-reform into the goals of the revolution.[33]

Replacing an esoteric issue (one based an ideology like communism) with an issue having great exoteric appeal (one based on concrete grievances such as land-reform) is a commonly used tactic in communist insurgencies where land-reform, economic equality, and other populist themes veil the communist insurgent's true motives. By focusing on concrete grievances the insurgent broadens his base of popular support from primarily the intelligentsia to one including the masses.

Much of the success of the communists in Vietnam was directly related to their ability to promote an acceptable issue to the populace. The easily identifiable issues of anti-colonialism, anti-feudalism, and anti-corruption aroused the "people to take up arms and share risks in a common struggle, [sic] it was able to win the very hearts and minds the American strategists always talked about but could never rally."[34] The

current economic, political, and social conditions existing in Vietnam today lay in stark contrast to the expressed promises of the revolution. Such internal conditions, along with Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, lend credence to the possible true motive of the revolution, the spread of communist ideology throughout Indochina.[35]

Should the insurgent fail to identify an issue readily supportable by the people, he may resort to coercion to gain popular support. The most violent form of coercion is terrorism. The purpose of terrorism is to demonstrate the inability of the government-in-being to cope with the insurgency; thereby enhancing the image of strength the insurgent strives to achieve. By demonstrating his own strength vis-à-vis the strength of the government, the insurgent hopes to portray the inevitability of his success. The likelihood of a victorious outcome is a major ingredient in the populace's willingness to support any movement advocating a change in the ruling regime.

If the insurgent resorts to terrorism, he must carefully control both the selection of the terrorists' targets and the duration of the stage of terrorism. Otherwise, it might well cost him the very popular support he seeks. The Huks were successful in their efforts to discredit the Philippine government through a potent terrorist campaign; nevertheless, they did not effectively control the terrorism. The turning point of the Philippine government's efforts to suppress the Huk insurgency occurred in April 1949. It was then that one of the commanders of a Huk guerrilla unit led an unauthorized ambush that killed the wife of a former Philippine president, Señora Aurora Quezon. Former President Quezon had gained enormous charismatic appeal by resisting the Japanese occupation in 1941

until forced to establish a government in exile. Señora Quezon's murder incensed the general populace causing many to withdraw their support from the insurgency.[36]

Although the insurgent must be wary in his use of terror, so must the government in its use of counter-terrorism. A prime goal of terrorism is often to elicit an over-reaction by the government or representatives of the government; one which will cause the populace to view the government as oppressive or unlawful. Examples of governmental over-reactions sought by the insurgent include unlawful or random imprisonment of suspected members of the populace, illegal searches of homes and offices, and general harassment of the population to expose the "guilty." In his book, Vietnam: A History Stanley Karnow explicitly describes an example of an over-reaction by a government official that had strategic implications for the United States' involvement in Vietnam.[37] Karnow's description of the widely publicized execution of a Viet Cong prisoner by South Vietnam's National Police Chief, General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, brings to mind the profound effect this incident had in precipitating world-wide outrage and casting doubt upon the legitimacy of South Vietnam's government officials.

Preceding the final phases of the Philippine government's counter-insurgency efforts, its forces were notorious for looting the peasantry, indiscriminate bombing of villages, and torture. The people feared government forces as much, if not more than the insurgents. This is a common phenomenon in communist insurgencies and one on which the communist insurgent relies.

The final means of gaining popular support is by demonstrating that the insurgency is ever-present and capable of seizing and retaining power.

The insurgent organization accomplishes this in two ways: (1) by establishing a "shadow government" capable of providing governmental services to the people, and (2) by demonstrating military strength. Presence, the goal of both the government in power and the insurgent's shadow government, is often easier for the insurgent to achieve than for the ruling government. This is because the insurgent is already located at the grass-roots level; a level at which the government is either unable or unwilling to establish a presence. In his book, War Comes to Long An, Jeffrey Race describes the significant advantage the insurgent holds over the government when he asserts, ". . . the Vietminh slept with the people, the village councils slept with the soldiers in the outposts."[38] An important step in any communist insurgency is to organize a "shadow government" at each administrative level including the smallest hamlet. The goal of the "governments" established by the insurgent is to capitalize on his presence at each level and replace popular dependence on the official government with a dependence on their own organization.

The second means of exhibiting presence and the capability to seize and retain power is by displaying military strength. In the early stages of an insurgency the insurgent conducts numerous small-scale, hit-and-run military actions against government forces; actions which the insurgent is certain to win and which are certain to impress the populace. Giap called these operations the "independent fighting method" or the "gnat swarm technique." "This involves mounting dozens of daily small-scale actions, no single one being important but cumulatively raising the enemy's anxiety level and destroying his self confidence."[39] Actions like these portray the insurgent as the "David" striking out against the "Goliath", the

government. The insurgent continually strikes at the government while the government flails ineffectually in attempting to destroy the "gnat-like swarms" of guerrillas. In short, the insurgent retains the initiative and demonstrates the government's impotence in quelling the insurgency.

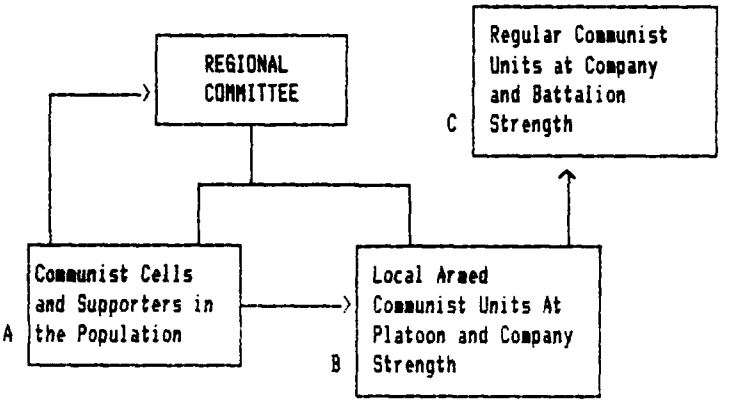
Organization

While the insurgent identifies and popularizes an issue throughout the masses, he must also begin the organization of active supporters. All insurgencies derive much of their strength from their organization. Likewise, insurgencies become susceptible to defeat through faulty or insecure organization. Giap held that *organization* of the populace and of the insurgent structure were central to the idea of revolutionary war:

> . . . Therefore, to make good preparations for armed insurrection, the most essential and important task was to make propaganda among the masses and *organize* them. . . . Only on the basis of strong political *organizations* could semi-armed *organizations* be set up firmly, guerrilla groups and guerrilla units *organized* which have close connection with the revolutionary masses, eventually to further their activities and development.[40] (Italics mine)

It is the organization that "sells" the cause throughout the countryside. The insurgent must analyze his organization in terms of structural dimensions and function. The organization must be equally capable of providing both political and military direction throughout the insurgent movement.[41] While true in conventional war, Clausewitz's dictum of the military being subordinate to the political assumes added significance in any communist insurgency. The key to most insurgent organizations is that the political leadership must exercise firm restraint over the military wing of the organization. Even more so than in conventional wars, conflicts short of war are dominated by political considerations.[42]

To ensure political control over military operations while still supporting the strategic aim of securing the support of the populace, most insurgencies organize in a fashion similar to that of the typical communist insurgent organization depicted in the figure below:



Insurgent Organization[43]

Although the diagram illustrates the organization below regional committee level, the relationships between the various arms are applicable to every level of command within an insurgent organization. The political elite of the insurgency at each level are found at the regional committee. It is the regional committee that makes all policy decisions for the area. The regional committee matches the insurgent's political ends to the means available and determines the ways in which they will conduct their operations. Examples of decisions made by the regional committee include: when to resort to terrorism as a means of coercion, when to increase the level and size of military actions against the government, and when to expand the insurgent organization into government controlled areas.

The communist cells and those members of the population who actively support the insurgency provide sustenance to the entire insurgent movement. They are the source of the insurgency's food and other supplies, recruits,

and intelligence. The communist cells within the population are responsible for fomenting the "cause" amongst the population and for maintaining a presence with the people. All logistical and intelligence support begins at "A" and is then distributed to "B" and finally to "C" through "B". Should members of the regional committee be captured or killed, it is likely that a highly trusted and proven member from "A" will be promoted to a position on the committee.

The "armed propaganda teams" formed by General Giap embodied these cells. Each member of the teams was ". . . highly conscious politically, [sic] and carefully selected among the members of the workers' and peasants' associations, the Communist Youth League and other revolutionary organizations."[44] Their goal was to organize and mobilize the populace, ". . . to raise the villagers' revolutionary consciousness . . .," enticing their active support for the insurgency.[45]

As insurgent control expands to new areas of the country, it is necessary for the scope of the organization to expand. An important function of the insurgent leadership is to determine the point at which organizational expansion should occur. This is a critical decision for the insurgent leadership. If the organization grows too rapidly and attempts to spread itself too thin, the government will easily defeat them. Nonetheless, the insurgency must enter government controlled areas to win the populace over to its side. The goal of the insurgency is, as has been previously emphasized, to broaden the popular support base. To do this insurgents must begin an incremental infusion of their organization into government controlled areas. As their grip strengthens, the size and complexity of the insurgent organization in that area expands. To expand his base, the

insurgent strives to establish an organization sophisticated enough to supply the instrumental social services to the populace that the government in power normally provides. In short, the insurgent achieves his goal by organizing a parallel government of their own to which the populace will show more allegiance than the legal government.

Cohesion

Clausewitz said, "Where there is *cohesion*, the analogy of center of gravity can be applied."[46] In more modern times John J. McCuen notes in his book The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War, that ". . . unifying the effort is the basic principle behind all effective revolutionary strategy, tactics, planning, and organization."[47] Successful insurgencies assail the government across all fronts: economic, political, military, and sociological. Mao identifies cohesion as being of paramount importance to any insurgency when he says that the ". . . three major principles for the army's political work are, first, unity between officers and men; second, unity between the army and the people; and third, the disintegration of the enemy forces."[48] (Emphasis mine)

The communist insurgency in Malaya (1948-1960) was continually plagued by a lack of unity of effort between the various communist cells. Several factors combined to cause continual friction for insurgent operations: (1) a lack of social cohesion due to ethnic cleavages between the Chinese, the Malayans, and the Indians, (2) significant ideological differences between the various armed groups, and (3) the lack of a "single overwhelmingly important leader" to unite the assorted insurgent factions.[49]

Though not communist inspired, several contemporary insurgencies illustrate the difficulty insurgents have in achieving the necessary unity of

effort to achieve success. The Afghan rebels fighting to oust the Soviets and topple the existing government are rife with tribal distrust of each other and have yet to confront the Soviets with a totally united effort. Albeit less obvious, the anti-communist effort to overthrow the Sandinista government in Nicaragua has often suffered from a lack of political unity.

The insurgent's organizational design provides much of the cohesion. There must exist a ". . . general headquarters [the regional committee in the figure above] . . . to provide the common political sense of direction, integrated strategy, and discipline."[30] This headquarters may be administered by either politicians, the military, or a committee represented by members of both the military and civilian leadership, but as said earlier, the political aims must be paramount in guiding decision-making. As Mao Tse-Tung directed his followers, "Every communist must grasp the truth, 'Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun . . . [but] the Party commands the gun, and the gun must never be allowed to command the Party."[31]

External Support

> It is sometimes said that insurgents start with nothing but a cause and grow to strength, while the counter-insurgents start with everything but a cause and gradually decline in strength to the point of weakness.[32]

To help offset the significant advantages the government possesses over its opponents, many communist insurgencies seek external support as a source of strength. O'Neill identifies four forms of external support available to the insurgent: (1) moral support, (2) political support, (3) material support, and (4) sanctuary.[33] Notwithstanding the fact that moral and political support are intangible means of support, they can be

extremely helpful to the insurgent in terms of establishing a measure of legitimacy, not only among the populace, but also in the international community. If a nation is isolated physically, like the Philippines and Malaya, or if sympathetic nations are committed elsewhere, like China was during the Huk insurgency 1946-1955, moral support is sometimes the only support available to an insurgent.

Material support and sanctuary are probably the most useful forms of support a sympathetic nation can provide an insurgency, but they are also the most difficult to procure. If an insurgency can rely on a steady flow of supplies to its units, one of the most pressing problems of any insurgency, logistical sustainability, is solved. By receiving sanctuary in a country neighboring their target country, insurgents are permitted to train, refit, and rest beyond the reach of government forces. The sanctuaries available to the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese within Cambodia and Laos, and the material, political, and moral support they received from the Soviet Union were invaluable to their prosecution of the insurgency against the government of South Vietnam.

Sanctuary within the Honduran border and a significant though often unreliable flow of material, moral, and political support from the United States have been instrumental in allowing the Contras to continue combat operations against the Sandanistas. It is yet to be seen the extent to which they have depended on this support.

The Huks received little external material support. Instead they had to depend on combat actions to allow them to gather weapons from the government forces' dead, or upon raids on armories or government barracks.

The isolation of the Philippines of course precluded them from receiving sanctuary in any neighboring lands.

Environment

There are four major environmental factors that impact on any insurgency: terrain, climate, the road/communication network, and the demography of the nation.[34] Insurgencies thrive most prolifically in restrictive terrain. Mao Tse-Tung, Ho Chi Minh, General Vo Nguyen Giap, and Che Guevara all stress the importance of secure base areas for an insurgency to find safe haven from government forces. These bases are normally found in the midst of thick jungles, rugged mountains, swamps, forests, etc.

Restrictive terrain similar to those noted above helps to equalize the mobility differential normally present between a national army and an insurgent force. It degrades the ability of mechanized and motorized vehicles, normally only possessed by the government, to traverse terrain rapidly. Thus the government forces are reduced to movement rates comparable to those of the insurgent, namely foot movement. Although the advent of the helicopter reduces the effects of restrictive terrain on government forces, it does not alleviate the problems altogether, as U.S. Army forces found in Vietnam.

The jungles of Vietnam and Malaya, the multitude of islands comprising the Philippines, and the mountainous areas of Peru, all provide security to an insurgent by restricting the movement of the government forces. The more extensive the area of restrictive terrain the more the government will have to disperse its forces to secure likely areas of insurgent activity. In spite of this advantage, it can be a two-edged sword by likewise causing a dispersal of the insurgent effort. The Philippines are composed of over

7,000 islands. Although the government could not possibly secure each island, neither could the insurgents spread their cause beyond their area of primary strength, Luzon. Thus the terrain served to limit the spread of the insurgency.

Climate is a somewhat neutral player in insurgencies since its has similar effects on each belligerent. Regardless, as a factor influencing military operations it must be considered by the operational planner. Weather (e.g., wet or dry seasons) is likely to determine the timing of major offensives as they did in Vietnam. It is also likely to influence the easea of movement along routes of advance and lines of communication. Climate is also a factor that determines the planting and harvesting periods for agrarian societies; a time when many of the soldiers, insurgent and government alike, will be occupied with farming. "All told . . . climate is difficult to isolate and define as crucial to insurgent success."[88] But it is also difficult to isolate and define climate to be crucial to the government's success although it is an important consideration in any campaign plan.

The communication network within a nation besieged by an insurgent force is critical to the success or failure of the insurgency. The key to the importance of restrictive terrain lies in the manner in which its effects equalize the mobility of the opposing forces or even give the insurgent a relative mobility advantage. A good communication network (e.g., good roads, secure and well-developed waterways, etc.) works to neutralize the effects of the terrain. It also permits rapid shifting of government forces, but more importantly it helps to increase the contact between the

government and the people by eliminating the physical barriers separating them.

Finally, demographic factors play a distinctive role in insurgencies. The population distribution significantly effects the government's ability to establish a presence throughout the affected area. "Where the population is small and concentrated, it is easier for the government to control the people and sever their links with the guerrillas."[56] Where the populace is distributed in widely separated areas, it is normally difficult for the government to exert its influence.

Dispersion of the populace due to terrain characteristics was discussed earlier and applies equally in terms of demography. Dispersed population centers can be a result of various religious enclaves, variances in employment opportunities, or even governmental restrictions.

Societal cleavages, similar to those mentioned previously in regard to Malaya, are a significant demographic factor impacting on the ability of an insurgent movement to unite the various factions of the populace into a cohesive whole. Religion, ethnic differences, language, and class distinctions, while often symbols of dispute between the insurgent and the ruling government, also represent barriers to the cohesiveness of any insurgency.

Governmental Effectiveness

The most important consideration in the examination of any insurgency is the effectiveness of the government in ruling the nation. As Professor Walter Sonderland argues:

> As soon as the challenge is in the open the success of the operations depends not primarily on the development of insurgent strength, but more importantly on the degree of vigor, determination and skill with

> which the incumbent regime acts to defend itself, both politically and militarily.[57]

In his book The Anatomy of Revolution, Crane Brinton echoes the importance of an effective governing body when he describes the common characteristics of nations ripe for revolution. One of these relates to governmental effectiveness. He says that a nation open to revolution almost always has a ". . . governmental machinery [that] is clearly inefficient. . . ."[58]

The most important task of any government facing an insurgency is to project the determination to prevail against the insurgency and portray the inevitability of their success. Frank Kitson posits:

> . . . few individuals can possibly support a government which is obviously going to lose, even if they sympathize with its policies and detest those of the insurgents. If the government is to be successful therefore, it must base its campaign on a determination to destroy the subversive movement utterly, and it must make this fact plain to the people. If it intends in the long term to relinquish control of the country to another government, it must make plain the fact that it will only do so when that government is strong enough to ensure that the enemy can not gain power.[59]

Once the will to prevail is lost, or even if the people perceive that it is lost, the insurgent is almost always assured victory. This rang true when Britain pledged in February 1966 to leave Aden in 1968 regardless of the outcome of their efforts to defeat the insurgents.[60] It was proven once again in Vietnam when the United States instituted a public policy of Vietnamization with the ultimate goal of withdrawing its forces from Vietnam within a specified time period. It remained only for the insurgent to await the withdrawal of the major source of military power available to the ruling government. It is yet to be seen if this same phenomenon will occur when the Soviets institute their announced withdrawal from Afghanistan in May 1988.

Critical to the success of a portrayal of strength is that the government enact visible programs linking military, social, economic, and political action to "forge a sense of loyalty between . . .[the government]. . . and the people."[61] The government must direct each of the programs toward meeting the perceived needs of the populace, primarily to rectify the concrete grievances of the masses. Once the government accomplishes this, much of the insurgent strength will be neutralized.

SUMMARY

The characteristics of insurgency analyzed in this section are actually nothing more than a portion of a METT-T (Mission, Enemy, Terrain, Troops available, and Time) analysis for insurgencies. Many of its characteristics parallel those of a standard analysis of METT-T with the major difference lying in the importance of the many considerations regarding the population. If an operational planner expects to develop a campaign plan designed to defeat an insurgency successfully, he must account for the considerations outlined above. The next section develops an analysis leading to a determination of the vulnerabilities of the insurgency and possibly the insurgent's operational center of gravity and decisive points.

SECTION 4

THE CONCEPTS OF CENTER OF GRAVITY AND DECISIVE POINTS IN COMMUNIST INSURGENCY

> Operational art is the employment of military forces to attain strategic goals in a theater of war or theater of operations through the design, organization, and conduct of campaigns and major operations. . . . A major operation comprises the coordinated actions of large forces in a single phase of a campaign or in a critical battle. . . .
>
> . . . Its [operational art's] essence is the identification of the enemy's operational center-of-gravity--his source of strength or balance--and the concentration of superior combat power against that point to achieve a decisive success.[62]

If one accepts the validity of the statement above, then the foremost responsibility of the operational commander in designing his campaign is to identify his and the enemy's centers of gravity. The focus of this paper rests on determining the possible presence of a communist insurgent's operational center of gravity. Before discussing the operational center of gravity, the stage must be set by identifying the communist insurgent's strategic center of gravity because it relates directly to the operational level.

Clausewitz was clear in his identification of the strategic center of gravity of an insurgency. He said it ". . . is the personalities of the leaders and public opinion."[63] This study has identified the overriding importance of gaining popular support for legitimacy; i.e., the right to rule. In fact, as stated earlier, "all insurgencies are . . . a struggle for the support of the populace."

Insurgent warfare differs from conventional warfare in that both belligerents normally compete for the same strategic center of gravity, the popular support for the legitimacy of their organization to govern. Since the primary goal of both sides must be to legitimize their cause in the

eyes of the populace, whatever measures the insurgent takes to gain popular support will conversely remove a measure of popular support from the government, and vice versa.[64] Thus, the strategic center of gravity is shared.

Although Clausewitz's concept of strategic center of gravity certainly holds true for insurgent warfare, an operational center of gravity is much more difficult to identify. In their study Operational Art in Low Intensity Conflict, LTC Dixon and MAJ(P) Ayers identify a separate center of gravity for each element of an insurgency.[65]

ELEMENTS OF INSURGENCY	CENTER OF GRAVITY
Auxiliary Forces	Their material and psychological well being.
Militia	Their logistic support.
Hard Core Cadre	Security.
Political Elite	Political reform, the assumption of political control, and possibly, the charisma of the leadership itself.

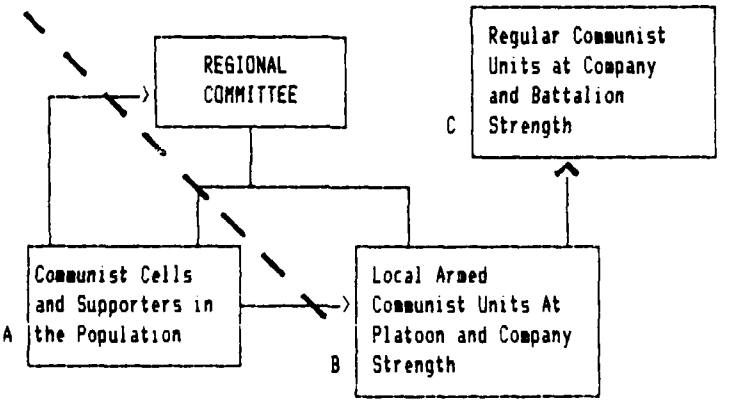
Dixon and Ayers continue by postulating that, "Security is an operational center of gravity of all insurgents," and that the ultimate center of gravity for an insurgent is "the cohesion of the movement itself."[66] These proposals for possible centers of gravity certainly do not track with the Clausewitzian concept of center of gravity. Telling a commander to target the "cohesion" of insurgency is no more useful than telling the same to a conventional commander. All forces depend on cohesion to achieve success in their operations. For the concept of center of gravity to be useful to the operational commander it must be more tangible than cohesion

and it must be more precise than Dixon's and Ayers' proposal that it is something different for every element of the insurgency.

Clausewitz said that "A center of gravity is always found where the mass is concentrated most densely."[67] This was amended earlier in this study by proposing that it was the greatest concentration of combat power. However, dispersion, not concentration, is the key to maintaining security for an insurgent movement. Only when the insurgent achieves enough combat power to defeat significant government combat forces will he concentrate his dispersed forces in one area.

The concept of a concentration of mass is clearly applicable to an insurgent's center of gravity, but the insurgent "hides" it by maintaining dispersion for as long as possible until the time to strike arrives. The mechanism that gives cohesion and direction to this dispersed center of gravity is found within communist insurgent organizations.

The center of gravity for any communist insurgency can be found in the aggregate of communist cells and active supporters in the population (A). Without this portion of the organization, the entire insurgent organization loses its power, and "unless . . . [it] is broken and eliminated, the insurgent guerilla units will not be defeated."[68]



The communist cells and active supporters within the population provide the supplies, intelligence, and recruiting base for each other cell. If the government severs the ties between the cells and the political committees above and the associated armed communist units (as depicted by the dashed line in the diagram above), the insurgent will be unable to resupply himself, rearm himself, or replace his casualties. He will soon wither away and become ineffective. Ultimately, having lost his popular support, he will cease to exist. Nevertheless, if "B" or "C" are destroyed and "A" remains relatively intact, the other branches can be reconstructed. While it is true that while the "cause" remains intact the insurgency may well regenerate its destroyed parts, until an active support base is rebuilt the movement will be powerless. Luis Taruc, the leader of the Huk insurgent movement, considered the active supporters to be the "foundation upon which [he] built his movement and without which it could not have survived."[69]

In conventional war, the operational planner often seeks to attack the enemy's center of gravity indirectly by assailing the enemy's decisive points. This is no less applicable in insurgencies, since each insurgency has identifiable decisive points. By attacking these the operational level planner can indirectly attack the insurgent's center of gravity, the communist cells and their active supporters. This becomes apparent when applying O'Neill's framework for analysis and Professor Schneider's proposal that there are physical, cybernetic, and moral decisive points.

When this study analyzed the environment it stressed that secure bases are critical to the well-being of any insurgency. Secure bases in restrictive terrain provide the insurgent the opportunity to rearm, refit, and

care for his casualties. Without these bases the insurgent would continually be on the move, unable to reconstitute his combat power following engagements with government forces. Villages and hamlets that are strongholds of insurgent support are even more critical to the insurgent and are physical decisive points. It is these physical decisive points that often contain the communist insurgent's center of gravity discussed above. Sir Robert Thompson uses the analogy of a fleet at sea to depict the importance of these two decisive points.

> . . . a fleet at sea, . . . can use some tropical island and lagoon as its ocean base [secure base in restrictive terrain], but . . . must finally depend on its home ports [popular bases] as the source of its supplies and reinforcements. If an ocean base is put out of action, no permanent damage is done to the fleet's operational capabilities. But if the home ports are destroyed, the operating endurance of the fleet is immediately limited.[70]

As Thompson's analogy illustrates, the loss of either type of base would be a setback to the insurgent. Although the measure of strength each provides varies from base to base, each is a source of strength for the insurgent. They are not, however, the "hub of all power and movement." Depending on the significance of the base, its loss could have a marked influence on the campaign and precipitate an adverse decision by the insurgent. Thus, secure bases may become physical decisive points for the insurgent.

The analysis also included an examination of transportation networks within a nation and its effect on an insurgency. This investigation is also likely to uncover physical decisive points by identifying main supply routes like the Ho Chi Minh Trail used by the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese.

Insurgencies also have obvious cybernetic decisive points. Within the communist cells themselves there are key individuals responsible for proselytizing the "cause" to convert passive and non-supporters of the insurgency to active supporters. These cells also provide the runners for messages between cells and intelligence gatherers for the armed units and the political committees. By neutralizing these individuals the communist cell and active supporters in the population lose contact with the other cells of the insurgency and the organization begins to crumble.

Moral decisive points are probably the most important of all decisive points within an insurgency. Many of the "centers of gravity" Dixon and Ayers identified fall into the category of moral decisive points. Security, political reform, assumption of political control, and the charisma of leaders are all intangibles that draw support to an insurgency.

The key moral decisive point is the "issue." If government forces deprive the insurgent of a popularly supported "issue," then the communist cells and the active and passive support within the population will soon disintegrate. If the government can remove the "issue;" e.g., initiate substantial land reform like the Philippine government did in 1954 and like the Venezuelan government did in the 1960's, the insurgency will fail. Popular support will be lost.

In sum, an analysis of insurgencies clearly identifies an operational center of gravity for communist insurgencies. The communist cells of active supporters neatly fulfills the Clausewitzian concept for center of gravity with only minor modification. The most important characteristic is that they are truly the "hub of all power and movement, on which everything else depends." They are the source of supplies, recruits and intelligence

for the entire insurgency. Although they are not physically concentrated as Clausewitz demands, they derive strength from the security of their dispersion and will concentrate when necessary. The communist cells and active supporters are the cohesion of the movement. As Clausewitz said, "Where there is cohesion, the analogy of center of gravity can be applied."

Because a communist insurgency's center of mass is usually dispersed, its center of gravity is difficult to identify. Consequently, operational planners must normally strike the insurgency's center of gravity indirectly by attacking its decisive points. Thus, Jomini's decisive points are especially applicable to communist insurgencies. There are several decisive points the operational planner should target when planning a counter-insurgency operation. Concrete grievances of the populace, secure bases, and charismatic leaders are all targets which if destroyed by military means or neutralized through social, economic, or political means will have a "marked influence" on the enemy's center of gravity. By attacking the decisive points, the center of gravity will soon collapse.

CONCLUSION

FM 100-5 states that the essence of campaign planning is the identification of the enemy's operational center of gravity. Although such identification has been the focus of this study and is critical to the success of any campaign plan, FM 100-5 overstates its significance by considering it a more important task than determining the political aim of the insurgent and the counter-insurgent. This study concluded that the "political aim of any insurgency forms the structural basis for all else that occurs during the course of the insurgency."[71] Thus, low-intensity conflict doctrine should consider its identification to be the essence of campaign planning.

This does not diminish the importance of determining the enemy's center of gravity, but instead places it in its proper context. It is still essential that operational planners devising a campaign plan to defeat a communist insurgency determine the insurgent's "hub of all power". By identifying the center of gravity, the operational planner can avoid many of the pitfalls encountered by the United States in Vietnam.

In spite of the fact that the destruction of the national armed forces is almost certainly the aim of the communist insurgent, destruction of the insurgent's military arm is only part of the equation when conducting a successful counter-insurgency. The remainder must be the destruction of the legitimacy of the insurgent movement in the eyes of the populace. This is accomplished through the linking of social, economic, and political programs to remove the issue rallying the support of the populace, while simultaneously conducting integrated military operations to physically destroy the armed forces of the insurgent. By doing this, the operational planner will effectively disarm the communist cells and cause the active

support within the populace (the two of which comprise the operational center of gravity) to dissolve in favor of the government.

The theoretical concepts of center of gravity and decisive points are not only relevant to communist insurgencies, they are crucial. Any operational planner who sets about devising a campaign plan to defeat a communist insurgency in a given theater of operations without first assessing the sources of power for the insurgent does so at the peril of inviting ultimate failure. As stated earlier, the determination of the insurgent's operational center of gravity necessitates a prior determination of the strategic goals of the insurgent and then an examination of the major analytical variables discussed in Section 3 of this study.

Clausewitz's concept of center of gravity can be applied directly to modern military doctrine for countering communist-style insurgencies with only a slight modification in his emphasis that it is found "where the mass is concentrated most densely." Communist insurgents "hide" their center of gravity by maintaining dispersion for as long as possible.[72] Nonetheless, it is in these cells that one finds the cohesion that allows timely concentration of combat power and linkage to the strategic center of gravity, the legitimacy of the insurgency in the eyes of the populace.

Since the insurgent "hides" his center of gravity, decisive points assume added significance in counter-insurgency for they may be the only assailable target. Some modification to Jomini's original hypothesis concerning decisive points is also necessary. Considering the importance of popular support to any insurgency, it is not enough to simply identify geographic decisive points and accidental points of maneuver. Instead, the military should adopt Professor Schneider's modernization of Jomini's

concept by incorporating into its counter-insurgency doctrine a concept of decisive points that includes physical, cybernetic and moral decisive points. In this manner, the concept of decisive points becomes applicable to defeating communist insurgency.

If they are to have any utility for modern operational planners, theoretical concepts must be applicable to the realities of today. Thus, classical concepts retain their value only when their definitions are kept apace modern developments. It seems that Clausewitz foresaw much of the controversy modern soldiers are encountering as they attempt to apply his writings to modern conditions when he wrote:

> Theory will have fulfilled its main task when it is used to analyze the constituent elements of war, to distinguish precisely what at first seems fused, to explain in full the properties of the means employed and to show their probable effects, to define clearly the nature of the ends in view, and to illuminate all phases of warfare in a thorough and critical inquiry. Theory then becomes a guide to anyone who wants to learn about war from books; it will light his way, ease his progress, train his judgment, and help him to avoid pitfalls. . . . It is meant to educate the mind of the future commander, or, more accurately, to guide him in his self education, not to accompany him to the battlefield . . .[73]

The concepts of center of gravity and decisive points do not provide a textbook recipe for success in defeating communist insurgency in the field. Rather, they are a tool, a guide to the operational planner in determining the way in which to apply the means available to achieve the desired end state. An identification of the insurgent's center of gravity ensures the most effective route to the insurgent's collapse. The determination of the insurgent's decisive points presents assailable targets to the operational planner. Their collapse will have a cascading effect on the deterioration of the cohesion of the enemy's center of gravity, thereby leading to the defeat of the insurgent's strategy and a possible political solution.

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX A

PURPOSES OF INSURGENT MOVEMENTS[74]

Type	Target	Goal
Secessionist	Rejects the existing political community.	Attempt to withdraw from the current political community and establish a new autonomous political community.
Revolutionary	Reject the legitimacy of the regime.	Attempt to establish a new regime and radically transform the current social structure of the nation-state.
Restorational	Reject the legitimacy of the regime.	Attempt to replace the regime with one possessing the values and structure of a previous regime.
Reactionary	Reject the legitimacy of the regime.	Attempt to restore an idealized political order from the distant past, a golden age. Emphasize religious values and authoritarian structure.
Conservative	Reject the legitimacy of anti-government forces.	Attempt to maintain the existing regime when others are trying to topple it.
Reformist	Rejects current policies.	Obtain more political, social, and economic benefits without rejecting the political community, regime, or authorities.

APPENDIX B

APPENDIX B

ANALYTICAL VARIABLES[78]

I. Popular Support
   A. Active Support
      1. Provide supplies
      2. Provide intelligence
      3. Provide shelter
      4. Act as liaison with populace
      5. Participate in civil disturbances and protests
   B. Passive Support (Sympathizers who will not inhibit insurgent activity.
   C. Tools to gain popular Support
      1. Charismatic attraction (Lenin, Mao, Castro)
      2. Esoteric Appeal
         a. Target: Intelligentsia
         b. Focus: Ideology
      3. Exoteric Appeal
         a. Target: Intelligentsia and masses
         b. Focus: Concrete grievances
      4. Terrorism
         a. Purpose: demonstrate government weakness
         b. Why: Esoteric and exoteric appeals have failed
         c. Drawbacks:
            (1) Target of terror may be counter-productive
            (2) Duration of terror may become unacceptable
      5. Stimulate excessive government counter-terrorism
      6. Demonstrate potency of insurgency

II. Organization
   A. Structural Dimensions
      1. Scope (number of active supporters)
      2. Complexity
      3. Cohesion
   B. Functions
      1. To provide instrumental services
      2. Establishment of channels of expressive protest

III. Cohesion
   A. Common attitudes (shared values)
   B. Common sanctions
   C. Common organizational schema (formats)
      1. Control by politicians
      2. Control by military
      3. Control by independent military and civilian organizations

IV. External Support
   A. Moral: least costly to donor
   B. Political: international legitimacy
   C. Material

D. Sanctuary: provides lines of communication, secure bases for training, arms stockpiles, secure leadership and perhaps even a government in exile.

V. Environment
- A. Terrain
- B. Climate
- C. Road/Communication Network
  1. Highly developed: favors government as it allows them to use their more mobile forces
  2. Poorly developed: all are forced to foot movement, so it favors the guerrilla
- D. Demography
  1. Small, concentrated population centers: favor government by enhancing its ability to separate the people from the insurgent
  2. Societal cleavages: normally helpful to insurgents
     - a. Religion
     - b. Ethnicity
     - c. Language
     - d. Class

VI. Governmental Effectiveness (Most Important)

APPENDIX C

APPENDIX C[76]

GOVERNMENT REACTION TO FORMS OF VIOLENCE

Form of Violence	*Counter-Insurgency Tool*
Propaganda-Organizational Activity	1. Civic Action/Government Counter-organization 2. Psychological operations 3. Administration 4. Low-level police activity 5. Redress of grievances
Terrorism	Intensified police work and intelligence gathering
Guerrilla Warfare	1. Low-level military actions such as small unit patrolling, mobile operations against the hinterland, and guerrilla bases 2. Defend government forces' lines of communication 3. Avoid hurting the innocent
Mobile Conventional Warfare	Conventional Operations

NOTE: Each form of violence may be utilized by the insurgents at any time, therefore, the government's counteraction may entail each of the above simultaneously.

SECURITY MEASURES FOR COUNTER-INSURGENCY

(Designed to Separate the People from the Insurgents)

1. Detention without trial
2. Resettlement of sections of the populace
3. Government control of the distribution of food
4. Imposition of curfews
5. Restriction upon individual's movements
6. Issuance of identification cards

TOOLS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

1. Amnesty
2. Security
3. Material Benefits

ENDNOTES

ENDNOTES

1. Roger Trinquier, Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency. Translated from the French by Daniel Lee. (1964): pp. 3-4.

2. Commission on Integrated Long Term Strategy, Discriminate Deterrence (1988): p. 14.

3. Strategic Studies Institute, Low Intensity Conflict and the Principles and Strategies of War (May 1986): p. 4.

4. U.S. Army, FM 100-5, Operations (1986): p. 10.

5. U.S. Army, Campaign Planning: Final Report (4 January 1988): p. 13.

6. Carl von Clausewitz, On War. Translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (1984): p. 595.

7. "In countries subject to domestic strife, the center of gravity is generally the capital. In small countries that rely on large ones, it is usually the army of their protector. Among alliances, it lies in the community of interest, and in popular uprisings it is the personalities of the leaders and public opinion. It is against these that our energies should be directed." (from Clausewitz, On War: p. 595. Note: underline is my emphasis.)

8. The focus of this paper is on examining the possibility of an operational center of gravity, but the historical examples developed provide ample opportunity to test the validity of Clausewitz's strategic center of gravity for popular uprisings.

9. Clausewitz, On War: pp. 485-486.

10. James J. Schneider, and Lawrence L. Izzo, "Clausewitz's Elusive Center of Gravity," Parameters (September 1987): p. 56

11. Clausewitz, On War, pp. 194-195.

12. Baron De Jomini, The Art of War. Translated from the French by Captain G.H. Mendell, and Lieutenant W.P. Craighill, U.S. Army (1977): p. 86.

13. James J. Schneider, "Chapter 1: The Theory of Operational Art; Theoretical Paper No. 3." Unpublished manuscript, 2d revision (March 1988): p. 28.

14. Schneider, "Chapter 1: The Theory of Operational Art," p. 28.

15. From the Glossary of FC 100-20 the following definitions are found:

> Insurgency: An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict. (p. Glossary-2)

Subversion: No listing.

Counterinsurgency: Those military, paramilitary, political, economic, psychological, and civil actions taken to defet [sic] subversive insurgency. (p. Glossary-1)

From JCS Pub. 1 the following definitions are found:

Insurgency: same as FC 100-20 (p. 185)

Subversion: Action designed to weaken the military, economic or political strength of a nation by undermining the morale, loyalty or reliability of its citizens. (p. 349)

Counterinsurgency: same as FC 100-20 (p. 94)

These definitions show a clear lack of understanding of the meanings of these terms. If the "organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government" comes in the form of an invasion across an international border by a foreign nation following a subversive campaign to undermine the opposing government, clearly this is not an insurgency. Additionally, subversion is not a *form* of insurgency, but instead is separate and distinct.

16. Frank Kitson, Low Intensity Operations: Subversion, Insurgency, Peace-Keeping (1974): p. 4.

17. Kitson, Low Intensity Operations, p. 3.

18. Kitson, Low Intensity Operations, p. 3-4.

19. Department of Defense, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (1 January 1986): p. 94.

20. Kitson, Low Intensity Operations, p. 4.

21. Definition of Relative Deprivation from Why Men Rebel by Ted Robert Gurr (1970): p. 24.

> *Relative deprivation* (RD) is defined as actors' perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities. Value expectations are the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled. . . . The emphasis of the hypothesis is on the perception of deprivation; people may be subjectively deprived with reference to their expectations even though an objective observer might not judge them to be in want. Similarly, the existence of what the observer judges to be abject poverty or "absolute deprivation" is not necessarily thought to be unjust or irremediable by those who experience it.

When one's perceptions of what he deserves are greater than what it is

possible for him to get, he becomes disgruntled with "the system" and seeks ways to change "the system" in his favor. The mass media has opened new horizons to the peoples of less developed countries; openly portraying a better life that may or may not be within their grasp. In another manner of speaking:
value expectations > value capabilities = dissatisfaction ---> conflict

22. Kitson, Low Intensity Operations, pp. 15-20.

23. Bard E. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," Insurgency in the Modern World (1980): p. 3.

24. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 3.

25. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 3.

26. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 3.

27. Roger Trinquier, Modern Warfare: A French View of Counterinsurgency (1964): p. 8.

28. Mao Tse-Tung, "On Protracted War," Selected Writings of Mao Tsetung (1972): pp. 228-229.

29. The three stages of protracted conflict Mao identifies are:
    1. The strategic defensive
    2. The preparation for counter-offensive
    3. The strategic counter-offensive

    The three stages of protracted conflict Giap identifies are:
    1. The stage of contention: guerrilla forces conduct hit and run actions, while the organization builds its revolutionary base.
    2. The stage of equilibrium: an equalization has developed between the two sides. It is similar to Mao's War of Movement.
    3. The general counter-offensive: stage of attacks on fortified positions.

    FC 100-20 identifies three phases of insurgency:
    1. Latent and Incipient Insurgency
    2. Guerrilla Warfare
    3. War of Movement

30. Kitson, Low Intensity Operations, p. 32.

31. Active supporters within the population provide the insurgent with supplies, intelligence, shelter, and liaison between the insurgent and the less strident supporters of the revolution. Often they will actively participate in peaceful demonstrations, strikes, and protests, but are not included as the actual combatants.

32. Passive supporters are those members of the population who sympathize with the insurgent and will not inhibit their activities; however, whether out of fear or a personal lack of commitment, they do not actively support the insurgency.

33. Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War People's Army (1961): p. 27.

34. Vo Nguyen Giap, How We Won the War (1976): p. 13.

35. Doan Van Toai, and David Chanoff. "Vietnam's Opposition Today," The New Republic (April 29, 1985): pp.23-25

36. Lawrence M. Greenberg, Major, The Hukbalahap Insurrection: A Case Study of a Successful Anti-Insurgency Operation in the Philippines - 1946-1955, (July 1986): p. 63.

37. Karnow writes of the incident:

> But the most memorable image of the upheaval in Saigon--and one of the most searing spectacles of the whole war--was imprinted the next day on a street corner in the city. General Nguyen Ngoc Loan, chief of South Vietnam's national police, was the crude cop who had brutally crushed the dissident Buddhist movement in Hué two years earlier. Now his mood was even fiercer: Communist invaders had killed several of his men, including one gunned down with his wife and children in their house--and Loan was roaming the capital in an attempt to stiffen its defenses.
>
> That morning, Eddie Adams, an Associated Press photographer, and Vo Suu, a Vietnamese cameraman employed by the National Broadcasting Company, had been cruising around the shattered town. Near the An Quang temple, they spotted a patrol of government troops with a captive in tow. He wore black shorts and a checkered sports shirt, and his hands were bound behind him. The soldiers marched him up to Loan, who drew his revolver and waved the bystanders away. Without hesitation, Loan stretched out his right arm, placed the short snout of the weapon against the prisoner's head, and squeezed the trigger. The man grimaced--then, almost in slow motion, his legs crumpled beneath him as he seemed to sit down backward, blood gushing from his head as it hit the pavement. Not a word was spoken. It all happened instantly, with hardly a sound except for the crack of Loan's gun, the click of Adams's shutter, and the whir of Vo Suu's camera.
>
> At the "five o'clock follies," as correspondents in Saigon called the regular afternoon briefings in the U.S. Information Service auditorium, Westmoreland exuded his usual confidence. But his report was smothered the next morning in America's newspapers, whose front pages featured the grisly photograph of Loan executing the Vietcong captive.

Excerpt taken from Vietnam: A History, by Stanley Karnow, Copyright 1983 by WGBH Educational Foundation and Stanley Karnow. SAMS Reprint: p. 4.

38. Jeffrey Race, War Comes to Long An (1976): p. 40.

39. Douglas Pike, PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam (1986): p. 226.

40. Giap, People's War People's Army, pp. 77-78.

41. Giap, How We Won The War: p. 16.

42. The primary exception to this is illustrated in "focoism", the brand of revolutionary warfare championed by Fidel Castro in Cuba, and Che Guevara in Bolivia. Although highly successful in Cuba, the usefulness of this form of warfare has been highly discredited since Guevara's downfall in Bolivia.

43. Sir Robert Thompson, Defeating Communist Insurgency: The Lessons of Malaya and Vietnam (1964): p. 30.

44. Vo Nguyen Giap, Heroic People, p. 142, as quoted in PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam, by Douglas Pike (1986): p. 29.

45. Douglas Pike, PAVN: People's Army of Vietnam (1986): p. 30.

46. Clausewitz, On War, pp. 485-486.

47. John J. McCuen, The Art of Counter-Revolutionary War: A Psycho-Politico-Military Strategy of Counter-Insurgency (1966): p. 69.

48. Mao Tse-Tung. "On Protracted War,": p. 260.

49. Bert H. Hooper, "Malaya (1948-1960)," Challenge and Response in Internal Conflict: Volume I, The Experience in Asia (February 1968): pp. 447.

50. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 13.

51. Mao Tse-Tung, "Problems of War and Strategy," Selected Military Writings of Mao TseTung, (1972): p. 274.

52. Kitson, Low Intensity Operations, p. 29.

53. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 15.

54. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 16.

55. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 18.

56. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 19

57. Walter C. Sonderland, "An Analysis of the Guerrilla Insurgency and Coup D'Etat as Techniques of Indirect Aggression," International Studies Quarterly (December 1970): p. 345; as quoted by O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 19.

58. Crane Brinton, The Anatomy of Revolution, p. 251.

59. Kitson, Low Intensity Operations, p. 50.

60. Kitson, Low Intensity Operations, p. 50.

61. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 23.

62. FM 100-5, p. 10.

63. Clausewitz, On War, p. 594.

64. Howard L. Dixon, Col., USAF, and Charles M. Ayers, Maj, USA, Operational Art in Low Intensity Conflict (September 1987): pp. 8-9. The concept of "shared" centers of gravity was proposed by the Low Intensity Conflict Center, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

65. Dixon, and Ayers, Operational Art in Low Intensity Conflict, pp. 9-11.

66. Dixon, and Ayers, Operational Art in Low Intensity Conflict, p. 10.

67. Clausewitz, On War: p. 485.

68. Thompson, Defeating Communist Insurgency, p. 56.

69. Greenberg, The Hukbalahap Insurrection, p. 48.

70. Thompson, Defeating Communist Insurgency, p. 38.

71. See page 12.

72. See page 33.

73. Clausewitz, On War, p. 141.

74. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," p. 3.

75. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," pp. 5-19.

76. O'Neill, "Insurgency: A Framework for Analysis," pp. 19-26.

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